

Aftermath

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Summary: It's what I think Halo 3 will be about for Miranda, Johnson, and the Arbiter

1. Chapter 1

This is what I think will be Halo 3 for Miranda and Johnson, the Arbiter's part. It continues after the Arbiter asks 343-Guilty Spark where the arch is.

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"The arch's location was not included in my data arrays. Is there anything else I can do to help you?" The Oracle replies somewhat apologetically. The Arbiter then looks at the ground and thinks to himself 'If the Prophets know the arch's location, they can still activate this ring and destroy us all.'

Just then, a platoon of Brutes burst into the control room to find the Arbiter and the two humans standing over Tartarus's corpse. A shocked expression crosses the face of the Brute Captain. "They have murdered the chieftain." He turns to his troops. "You know what he would expect of us." The Brutes become enraged and charge at their leader's killers. The Arbiter prepares to defend himself, finding only a plasma rifle of a fallen Elite. Johnson backs up. "Oh, Shit," he said. While Miranda struggles to pick up Tartarus's massive hammer, Johnson takes aim with the beam rifle. He manages to kill a Brute before jumping on to the control platform. The Arbiter charges towards the group of Brutes. Firing his plasma rifle, he manages to knock off one of the Brutes' helmets and hits another in the eyes, blinding him. He shoots the first Brute several times in the head, killing him.

The Captain remains untouched as he stomps toward Johnson. As the Brute slaps the beam rifle out of Johnson's hand, the Sergeant kneels down and puts his hand over his head. He looks up to find the Arbiter with an overheated plasma rifle held to the Brutes neck. The Brute

Captain looks at the Arbiter from the corner of his eye. "More will co-" The Arbiter cuts the Captain off by jamming the overheated rifle into his neck and burning away a large amount of flesh. The brute falls to the ground screaming and hemorrhaging from the neck. "You're sick," Johnson stated. "Let them come," The Arbiter said. "I shall burn them all as their chieftain once burned me." Miranda then smacks a startled Brute off the edge of the platform with the hammer. (A/n: How she managed to pick that thing up, we may never know.)

She smacks the blinded Brute off the edge of the platform. 343 hovers over them laughing. "Excellent", he said "now activate the ring"! "No oracle" the Arbiter snaps. 'Oracle, you may be, but I will not kill us.' "Allow me to rephrase that. Give it to me!" 343 lunges at the Arbiter's head, causing it to bleed and giving his vision a shade of purple. A humming noise can be heard from above the roof of the control room. About twenty sentinals and six enforcer units come bursting in from the roof.

While the Arbiter is getting up Johnson hollared "get out of here, both of yah, I'll take 'em." He finds his beam rifle and takes aim. Miranda helps the Arbiter up thinking to her self 'he better not betray us later when we could have left him to die.' They rush out through the still burning entrance to the ledge. The Arbiter looks at his Banshee to find it had been reduced to scrap metal by additional sentinals.

The Arbiter lets his eyes linger a moment on the key of destruction before shattering it on the cold metal under his feet, reveling in the fact that it can destroy no more. Johnson backed out of the "door" to the control room to the platform where his allies are waiting. "Dammit!" he yelled, turning to face the Arbiter. "Why do your weapons overheat and burn your friggen hand?" He threw the smoldering hot weapon at a sentinal, causing it to catch fire and crash into an Enforcer, lowering its shield in the process. "Even if we survive this friendly gathering," Johnson begins, with more than a hint of sarcasm. "How do we get down?" Something casted a large shadow over the three warriors.

2. Chapter 2

It was a Phantom. It's guns are pointed at the door the sentinals are passing through. The door crumbles by the Phantom's cannons. It starts to glow as though the sentinals are about to break through. Miranda and Johnson are startaled by the fact they float aboard the Phantom from the gravity lift. Miranda looks around the room in the Phantom. She sees two more Elites in the corner of the room. They look to be in pain. The door to the Phantom's control room opens.

"Hello Arbiter" says the silver Elite. He has damaged Mandables and green eyes. The Arbiter rose and nodded his head with respect. "Friends of yours Arbiter"? The silver Elite said. The Arbiter looked over at the two beings, which belonged to the race he was fighting, and said "... yes". Johnson stood up and said "The name's Sergeant Johnson she's Miranda" he said pointing to Miranda. Johnson leveled his arm toward the silver elite. The elite hesitated and put his hand on his sword. "Hey what are yah doin, I just wanted to shake your hand" said Johnson his smile turning to a frown. The silver Elite met hands with Johnson and shook his arm up and down. "Well now that

we're all one big happy family lets get out of this area, we aren't exactly hidden in a giant floating purple roach". Miranda walked towards the silver elite and said you know our names what is yours? As the silver Elite walked back into the cockpit to provide his pilot with directions he turned his head toward her and said "call me captain. We'll be arriving at a safe point that a few of our allies made during our first landing on the ring.

The Phantom sped off over the hills to the "safe point". The view from the damaged back of the Phantom showed many fallen elites and a few brutes fighting over weapons. The next Hill they passed had corpses galore, broken vehicles, blood of all sorts of color. A few brutes were riding creatures known as blind wolves. They looked like reptiles with only hind legs no arms. They are blind and use sonar as there eyes like an earth bat. The brutes saw the ship overhead and fired there fuel rode cannons. The Phantom shot all off the brutes after one pass and left a burning trench. It Passed another battle field that had a broken Scarab. The Phantom slowed down into a canyon that had covenant vehicles all in it. The Phantom parked.

The elites and the two humans walked out of there Phantom. "Wait here" the Arbiter said to Miranda and Johnson. The Arbiter went to the other higher elites that were gathered around a big rock half way in the ground and half surfaced to the top. The 2 humans stood and observed there surroundings. They saw that the canyon had hills and lot's of water falls leading into a huge water fall that went off the edge. They looked at all the Elite soldiers. Alot off them were badly wounded, some were missing arms. There was about 90 elites but only about 40 percent of them looked to be in good shape. There were Elites that were being tended to by medical Elites (black armored elites with red outlining on there armor plates). There were trees with elite scouts (green elites) that had alien binoculars. Four Phantoms were parked and around the two exits of the canyons were about 6 ghosts 4 spectres and there was only one wraith that was gaurding a dug out cave into the wall. There were alot of caverns that had a different purpose than the others. Some held vehicles while some were armories and food shelters. grunts were plentiful about 200 and 40 hunters were scatterd around for protection. "Are you hungry"? said a grunt. Johnson looked at Miranda and then at the grunt "I guess, what kind of food do you have"? "The finest Blind wolf meat ever" said the grunt "well I guess I'll go" said Johnson " See you later Miranda" "Bye Johnson don't get into any fights okay"? Johnson laughed and walked away with the grunt.

The Arbiter came back to Miranda and said "I told the elites of your presence we will not harm you". The captain stood on the rock that was planted in the ground "attention warriors, we can not stay here for long there are still elites, grunts, and hunters doing battle against the Brutes. The humans have sided with us to form a rebellion against the Brute menace". The alien soldiers roared with confidence. For now we rest for the upcoming battles that lie ahead. Every one report to a den in tunnels U through Z. We must go before nightfall our Spec ops elites will have gaurd duties come night fall. Squads 1-5 for 2hours, squads 6-8 for 1 and 1/2 hours and my squad for the remainder. I'll brief you all in the morning. Everyone with the acception of squads 1-5 and any medical officers with weak to aid go to a den. Eveyone started toward a den. The captain ran to the 2 humans and said " you may sleep in my den along with the Arbiter if you wish. Miranda looked at Johnson

and said" sure we will, thank you". A cold breeze passed by.

3. Chapter 3

Miranda awoke before any one else did and walked outside. She needed some time to think.I wonder whats going to happen she looked up and saw a sunrise appear above the hill.I wonder if my father would be proud of me right now. I've sided with what he tried to kill... although if peace comes out of it it won't matter right? She paused and looked over the horizon. It started to rain, the sound of thunder could be heard. Just then a lightning bolt stabbed the ground lighting up a hill. She saw thousands of figures flying into view. The sound of Drones came closer giving themselves away.

The Captain marched out with his squad to take his shift. Miranda ran to him and said" I saw an army of drones coming over the horizon". A bolt of lightning hit the groun causing a fire. " It looked like at least 1000 drones". Another bolt revealed the drones presence. "We are out numbered!", the captain said. He looked at his team and said "wake every one up, except you Ning help me ready a bomb, we'll blow them up while we escape but we must buy some time so wake up everyone." Miranda was given a plasmarifle and a magnum (that the elites salvaged) by a squad of grunts. The drones filled the canyon walls and plasma fire filled the canyon. Aliens swarmed out to buy time. Even the wounded fought and were slaughtered by the drones on slaught. Even hunters fell squashing a few grunts. Blood leaked through the water tainting it with a feeling of death. One grunt was carried away by a drone. The silver elite came back 10 minutes later, after Miranda killed 3 drones and helped a group of grunts aboard a Phantom. "Miranda," the captain said "follow me into the phantom the bombs have been planted in each side of the canyon, it will crumble along with the drones. Miranda started to run to the ship when 5 drones blocked her path. She shot one in the head with the magnum killing it. The drones swarmed her and bit her causing her to drop the magnum. She elbowed one in the face, pinned one to the ground with her foot on it's skull and burnt the remaining drones wings off with her plamarifle. She stomped through the drone's skull and was then scratched by 1 of the 2 drones. Her forehead started to bleed. An elite shot one of the drones in the head. The elite was badly injured and had purple blood all over it. The drone panicked and ran into a squad of grunts. The grunts tackled the drone and beat it to death. Miranda looked at the elite that helped her and said "Thank you". The elite didn't speak but instead it toppled over. A team of grunts came to pick up the fallen elite. There was gunfire and noises of peril everywhere. Miranda made it into the phantom with the captain.

The captain talked to every soldier from his link to there helmet "Every one get into a Phantom,Seraph,or Banshee in side caverns "F" trough "K" detonation time is estimated two minutes".

Johnson was already in a cavern where he had eaten alien food which was actually better than some human food. An elite saw Johnson and said "detonation for the bombs is two minutes, my bomb pilot died to the drones would you accopany me"? "I guess but, you can't get mad if I'm not good at it". The two ran past the drones that had tunneled through the rocks in the cave. Johnson saw a grunt who was being attacked by a drone. "Wait one of your buddies is going to be left behind" said Johnson The Elite glared at Johnson and said " I will not waste my ammo on such an inferior creature". Johnson Pulled the

elites carbine off it's belt and shot one of the drones in the head. Johnson was then smacked in the face by the Seraph elite pilot. "You heard me don't waste my ammo". Johnson punched the elite in the neck, wrestled it to the ground, and knocked it out. Johnson ran to help the grunt and twisted the drones neck. Tannish blood poured out of the drone's head. "Thank... you..." The grunt struggled to say. Johnson helped the grunt to it's feet. "You... your one ... of the...hum...ans" said the grunt. The grunt heard in it's helmet that there was a thirty second warning. Johnson picked up the elite he had knocked out and guided the grunt into the seraph. "Twenty second warning" the seraph computer control said. "Dammit how do you fly this thing"? said Johnson. The grunt flipped a switch and held down a button. The ship started to float. "okay so how does it move"? "Use the two levers, one makes you turn right, one makes you turn left". select speed... better ...press 5. Johnson pressed 5 and the seraph went straight out of the cavern and right before the seraph hit the wall on the cliff side the elite was awake again and stepped in. It turned to speed 10, ran into about 20 drones and caught up with every one else.

On one of the screens it showed the canyon crumbling. "good job did any body miss a ride?" the captain said over the speaker. "Only the ones who died and a wounded Hunter did not make it aboard" said the Scout who patrolled the caverns. "Not bad but we can't waste any time I already have been to the Cruiser. It's parked in the forrunner city by the frozen waste lands. Flood are swarming the ice land and it seems to affect them in many ways making them more deadly. A hologram appeared and showed a human flood with spikes coming out of it's back and a tail twice as big as it's body. "Their tail works like an earth scorpion's tail. We'll need to strengthen our army. Our goal is to rescue any elites, grunts, hunters, or humans we can find and salvage any food our weaponry. We have to get to the Cruiser before the brutes get it. That's our only ticket off this ring. If the brutes are as strong as estimated than we may fall to their wrath. We are going to split up and search the continents for allies. Captain out".

4. Chapter 4

The elite in the Seraph with Johnson glared at him. "thank you" the elite said. Johnson walked over to him, "Sorry I had to knock you out but you were going cra-" the elite cut him off " I want to put that behind us, oh... and the name's Aung". "You two go to the passenger space". The grunt and Johnson sat in the passenger room. "I can't beleive your a human. Let me get a good look at you. What's under your helmet"? "It's a magical invention called a hat and I have hair under it"! Johnson said. " Ahhh, no need to shout did I offend you?" Asked the grunt trying to sound innocent. " Chill, it was only sarcasm". Aung walked in the passenger room. "you to better hold on tight, we're about to pass brute territory."

The ship started to rumble. It was being fired at. "What should we do"? asked Aung over the loud speaker "normally we'd just bomb it but there are bretheren down there we're sending down the finest warriors and the wounded can Either drive a ship or rest. This is our first stop. Captain out".

"Am I going?" asked Miranda. "You may if you wish" said the captain. "Here, take a sword and a needler". "Why a needler?" asked Miranda.

"brutes weakness is a needler, It can pierce there skin and get there weak inners". Miranda took the weapons and turned toward her new allies. "Your welcome" said an elite in the corner. Miranda looked over and was confused. "me"? Miranda asked. "Yah remember I shot that drone for you...you said thank you, I fainted in battle". The elite said, Miranda then said, "Oh yah I remember, my name is Miranda, what's yours"? "Orte" the elite said. "Well Orte looks like we're going to team up". "pile out" The captain said as the phantom slowed and parked behind some rocks.

"Dammit to hell"! Aung said " We're going to crash"! "Then we're going to go down swinging" said Johnson "fire all the bombs we have".

Johnson pulled all the bomb slot triggers and didn't have time to aim. The 3 bomb hit in a number of places, one in the middle of, the brutes one hit the top of the mountain that the brutes swarmed out of, and the last went over the horizon into one of Delta Halo's oceans. " Listen human the Captain said DO NOT RELEASE THE BOMBS"! The ship spiralled and crashed.

"What were they thinking"? said the Captain as he and his team ran over to see what had happened. Johnson crawled out of the ship. He was bleeding and his hat was torn. Blood ran down his face. It tasted a little salty. Miranda and the captain ran over to Johnson while Orte fought off the brutes.

" Johnson" Miranda yelled from a distance. Johnson stood up

against a rock, plasma fire came in from all sides of the rock. For the first time as a marine Johnson thought it was over. Johnson's life flashed before his eyes, he thought about his wife at home his kids and his dog. His wedding, his first car, and watching Football with his best friend, Joseph Taylor. Johnson was scared and pissed he saw a near by Beam rifle and 2 carbines. He wasn't about to let a team of furrballs from space take his life. He jumped on the rock and sniped a Jackal sniper dead between the eyes, he shot 2 brutes helmets off and sniped a pile of grenades on the ground blowing up 4 Jackals 3 brutes and one ghost. He fell back off the rock and had fainted. Miranda finally caught up with him, catching him and she rested him up against the rock.

The captain looked at the fallen Seraph that the human crawled out of and salvaged 8 plasma grenades, 7 plasmarifles, and one fuel rod cannon. There were no survivors besides Johnson. He gave the fuel rod to a near by grunt who made a crater where 3 Jackals once stood "how do you like that, you traiters?" yelled the grunt. The captain looked around and saw bloodshed, grunts riding on enraged brutes, elites fighting with everything they had, and when they ran out of ammo they fist fought to the death. He saw a grunt that got shot on the side of his methane mask, and the grunt flopped around like a fish gasping for air. Explosions were every where. An elite's skull was squashed by a brutes foot. The captain needed to do something or else his elites may lose faith in his judgement. He ran in, sliced a brutes head off, stabbed a Jackal into the side of the mountain, and kicked off the wall landing on a brutes head. To his surprise it was another Cheiftan like Tartarus only she was a female and had longer hair than the other brutes. She had the mark of Cheiften on her back. He was going to kill her but had another idea he took from his belt 2 plasma grenades and held them over her head. "Your brutes better cease fire

or you'll die". said the captain. She hesitated and said "I could just kill you- "If I die my grenades will be triggered and blow you up" the captain said in an evil voice. " Damn you captain" said the Cheiftan.

5. Chapter 5

The brutes aimed at the captain. "Drop your weapons" said the Cheiftan. Her brutes didn't at first, but realized that since they couldn't save there old Cheiftan... they weren't about to lose the new one. The fighting stopped. Everyone stared in suspense. "How many soldiers are alive Ning"? the captain asked. All of the warriors stood in lines of 12 including Miranda. The wounded lay to the side. 2 minutes later Ning had finished counting. "69 elites, 40 of them wounded, 30 hunters, 12 are wounded, 118 grunts, 98 are wounded, 2 humans, 1 is wounded. So a total of 226 warriors." "I see" said the captain "all brutes are to stand against the wall, Jackals on the wall to my left. Drop your weapon's!" The Brutes looked at there weapons and dropped them. The Jackals dropped there weapons as well. Grunts in good health will salvage any weapons they can find starting with the brute's". The grunts walked around gathering the weapons. Some of the brutes snarled at them. One grunt smacked a Brute in the face. That shut him up.

"Are all weapons aboard the Phantoms"? asked the captain

"Yes sir" Orte said. "Have any of you seen the Arbiter around?" the captain asked. "His body was not found and he's not aboard a Phantom." said Ning. Just then marching could be heard from inside the mountain entrance. The Arbiter came out and behind him were 57 elites, 96 grunts and 2 hunters all really skinny and shivering. "There are humans inside, they refuse to come with us." "I see, send in one of the humans." the Captain said still mounted on the brute Cheiftan's head. "some one restrain the Chieftan with the plasma cuffs" 3 elites went behind the Chieftan and cuffed her. " I hope you don't have ticks now captain" said Johnson with a smile, as he walked out of the medical Phantom. The Cheiftan smiled an evil smile and looked toward her brutes. She was pushed to a space between 2 spec ops elites, with carbines pointed at her head. "Johnson, Miranda explain to the humans what's going on" ordered the Captain. "Yes sir" said Johnson and Miranda at the same time. All of the warriors marched into the natural stronghold. The weak and hungry went back to the Phantom for food, they hadn't eaten any thing, that wasn't raw or had bugs crawling on it in about a week. Squads 5-7 and 2 hunters were outside. There job was to watch the brutes and their Cheiftan, and make sure there was nothing suspicious going on.

"Where are the humans?" asked Miranda. "Down the hall on the final right." said the Arbiter. As they were walking grunts picked up any weapons they could find and went back and forth out of the stronghold to the Phantom's armory. "Salvage any food you can find, and bring it back to the Medical Phantom squad 3." ordered the Captain. Squad 3 split up into the 8 rooms that held food fit for hundreds of brutes for at least 6 months, which ment the members of the rebellion wouldn't be hungry for 16 months. The warriors made it to the brink and saw the humans, some were asleep others were dead. "Miran...da" a soldier said. She turned and saw the soldier sweating up against the bars. "Is it true Miranda?" asked the soldier. "did we side with the enemy?". The captain turned away. "We are at peace" Miranda said

"It's nothing to be ashamed of, but that doesn't mean the war's over. The Prophets still must be stopped, and the brutes too." The marines looked at each other. "I don't trust them" one said. One of the elites glared at him. "We're at peace". The other soldier said. "Don't screw it u-" "don't talk back to me son I might have to beat some sense into you." The other soldier interrupted. "Both of you shut up, or I'll beat both of you." Said Johnson "Damn Smith, you ungrateful basterd, they offered us peace and you are going to pass it up. I understand if your mad at the fact that you've been in the cell for god knows how long, but they trust us, they protected us, I wouldn't lie to you. Are you done, are you going to cooperate?" Smith looked at the other soldiers and then the aliens and sighed. "... I guess." said Smith. "Anymore ungrateful basterd?" asked Johnson. He shot the ceiling twice. "Anyone,... okay."

Johnson walked over to the switch and pulled it. The bars fell foward. "Primitive beasts." said the captain. 8 grunts walked over to the humans and escorted them back to a Phantom.

"Humans are weak they'll slow you down." the Cheiftan said. She was then smacked by the two elites holding the carbines. "You want some of this" asked a marine. The Cheiftan growled. "Settle down Cheiftan." said one of the elites. "The name is Nemesis" barked the Cheiftan. She tried to break free. "wort wort woort, nobody can break out of those" the elite stated. Just then the cuffs broke and dissapeared. "Run" one of the humans said. The humans ran into a Phantom and they shut the door. Outside the humans heard elites screaming, and plasmafire. All 52 humans were in the Phantom crowded. "We're all going to die one said and crouched into the corner. The fighting sounded like it stopped, they didn't hear any thing and opened the door.

Outside they saw some elite and brute corpses. 1 hunter corpse was by the entrance to the strong hold. The humans looked scared. "The brutes ran into there stronghold." an elite with one arm said. "We must hurry or they'll catch up with the Captain, report to the armory at the third Phantom" The humans did as they were told. "Did every one die?" one of the humans asked "no some elites went in after the brutes along with a very pissed off hunter." said the elite. Everyone grabbed a weapon and marched into the stronghold.

The Rebellion was at the top of the strong hold. Bird like creatures flew away. As the Rebellion walked outside. They saw 4 Phantoms, 2 wraiths, 4 ghosts, and a crudly presented pile of weapons. "Everyone stop, and listen." the Captain said. Stomping could be heard up the path to the top. The captain told everyone to hide in or behind a Phantom. They hid waiting for what ever was approaching. They heard Plasma fire coming from down the path. The Captain looked behind him at the bottom of the cliff. He saw his warrior's corpses. He knew the brutes were enraged and that they would stop at nothing to kill them. The Captain sat there thinking. An idea came into his head. He ran into a Phantom and tried to contact the elites coming up the path. "everyone go back to the Phantoms below, try to round up the brutes, our snipe team will cover you."

"Everyone turn back know" the one armed elite said. The warriors did as they were told. "I Iygg will attract the brutes down to our Phantoms and Seraphs." aid the one armed elite. He threw a rock at the back of a brute's head and another at a Jackal's head. The brutes split up. One platone would take Iygg's team, the other will continue

up the strong hold to the top of the cliff.

Elites and humans ran outside of the stronghold to there Phantom. "Good." said the Captain watching as the brutes poured out as well. "snipe team cover the warriors below." All the elites with snipers took position and one by one the brutes fell. "Hello Captain" said Nemesis. She and her brutes walked up the path and were now outside on the cliff. "Nemesis I wish to fight you alone" said the Captain. "But of course" said Nemesis with a smile. The Rebellion stood by the cliff edge, the snipers still sniping, and the brutes stood against the mountain side. Nemesis pulled out an axe resembling Tartarus's Hammer. The Captain pulled out his sword.

6. Chapter 6

The captain lunged forward at Nemesis, but she hit him with the back of her axe. He fell, his neck was bleeding. Nemesis held her axe over her head and swung down at the Captain, but right before it hit him he rolled out of the way and slashed her arm. She looked at her wound and watched the blood drip out of her cut and splashed the ground. She became enraged and swung her axe at him, he ducked still bleeding and his point on his helmet fell to the ground. He ran up the axe still in the ground, and slashed her face left and right. He went for the finishing stab but she pulled her axe out of the ground and sent him flying. He flew into the mountain wall. One of his ribs cracked and he spat up blood. He stood up and she swung the axe and just barely hit him. His armor was cracked. She swung vertical that time and he rolled out of the way. He slashed the axe handle and it broke. She had nothing but her strength to use now. She jabbed him in the chest and he gagged blood. He backed up and fell off the cliff edge, or so everyone thought. Nemesis walked over and saw him hanging from his sword kicked off the wall and was above her. He pulled his arm back and when he got close enough slashed her face in half. She fell to the ground. Everyone looked at him in disbelief. "I have won" he said "everyone into a Phantom, we're leaving." The brutes growled and ran over to them, but everyone got into a Phantom unharmed. The Phantoms below rose as did the Seraphs and Banshees. The Phantom's on the cliff side rose and 2 picked up a wraith tank. The Phantoms flew away and the Seraph bombers caused the mountain to crumble.

Miranda, Johnson, Arbiter, and the Captain with his squad were in the leading Phantom. Miranda sat, thinking about what had happened that day... and her father. "You know my father had the same rank as you." said Miranda. The Captain turned around at her. "Keyes right?" asked the Captain. Miranda looked at the ground. "Yes." "Captain isn't all its cracked up to be. Everyone depends on you and if you screw up, then no one will look up to you. Sometimes you have to go out on a limb to gain respect for your past mistakes... even if it kills you." Arbiter turned to the Captain. "You ought to go to the medic." said the Arbiter. "I'm fine," snapped the Captain. "But we are going to make a stop and camp out over night, to train and eat." "You wouldn't happen to have a cigar would you?" asked Johnson. "What's a cigar" asked the Captain. Johnson looked around, he hadn't had a cigar in 2 days. "We land here in this field" the Captain told everyone over his link. "form and park in this formation". The screen displayed a formation.

"Captain out."

Everyone got into formation and parked. Everyone walked out of there ship. They all stood in single file, grunts in front, then humans, then elites, then hunters, and waited for the Captain to stand on the hill in front of them. He limped up the hill. "My warriors," he said our mission was a success. We overthrew the brutes, saved our brethren, made new allies, restocked our food and weapon supplies and, with few deaths at that. Good job warriors." The crowd roared. "Our mission is far from over. We have one more holding camp known of so far, we have to take back the Cruiser, rescue our brethren from the Holy city, make it back to earth, and stop the Prophet of Truth from destroying us all." The warriors held their weapons tightly and looked at one another. "We can do this, but now we must rest and eat. Everyone go do what you please, our grunt chef's will be serving food at all the Phatoms except mine. Your free time begins after we have a count of warriors. Ning, get to it." Ning walked around counting everyone. "108 elites, 175 grunts, 30 hunters, and 54 humans. A total of 367 warriors." announced Ning. "We gained 101 warriors since last count." said the Captain. Everyone go your free time is now drop your weapons off at the armory Phantom. Everyone scrambled putting their weapons away and going to get some well earned food. The weak were aided in front of the Captain's Phantom.

Johnson got in line for some food. 8 minutes later he arrived at the serving table that folded out of the wall in the Phantom but its real purpose was to work as a bunker. "What'll it be?" asked the serving grunt. Another grunt came over with a tray which displayed all the types of food they had. "I'll have the...2 pound blind wolf meat and those two blue fruits." said Johnson. "Yummy, the fruits are my favorite. They're called buckles." Said the grunt. What kind of drink would you like?" Johnson looked at tray and to his surprise the food disappeared and drinks came up. He thought the display food on the tray was real, they even smelled real, but they were just holograms. He saw some weird looking beverages and picked the orange looking one. "Great choice" said the grunt. "Here you are" he pulled a tray out from the cockpit where the food was prepared and handed it to Johnson "Thanks" said Johnson as he walked away to a group of marines sitting around blue fire.

"Hey it's Johnson." said Kyle McGee a soldier who once worked in Johnson's platoon. "Hey it's Kyle, how yah doin man?" Asked Johnson. "I'm fine Johnson." Said Kyle. "Do yah wanna train with me later?" Johnson thought about it and realized he might seriously hurt the guy making the warrior list go down. "Nah, not today, anyway." "What? You scared, Sarg'?" Asked Kyle. "No, I'm not. I just don't want to hurt you." said Johnson "All I hear are pathetic excuses." said Kyle. "Come on Sarg'." All the marines that could hear what was going on looked at Johnson. "Fine. I'll train with you, but if I hurt you, don't go crying to the Captain giving me a bad reputation." "That's what I'm afraid you'll do." said Kyle with a smile.

7. Chapter 7

The two stood in a circle that Kyle made with a stick in the dirt. Both fighters took their bullet proof vests off, along with their jacket. They had pants and a tank top on. The marines gathered around and two elites decided to watch as well. The two humans were waiting for the referee to say start. "Start." the referee said. The two circled each other. Kyle ran up to Johnson, faked a punch with his left and swung with his right. To Johnson's surprise, Kyle missed and

then realized that he ducked. He moved so fast, and he didn't understand why. Johnson uppercutted his way up causing Kyle's mouth to bleed. Johnson backed three feet away to see if Kyle had had enough. Kyle glared at Johnson. Three more elites came to watch. Kyle ran over to Johnson, ducking at the last second trying to trip him. Johnson realized quickly what Kyle was trying to do, and jumped so that when he landed he would land on Kyle's leg. Johnson succeeded. Johnson then realized that Kyle was trapped. Johnson crouched with one foot digging into Kyle's leg, and the other in the dirt. Johnson was about to punch him in the face but stopped right before it hit Kyle's nose. "Do you give up?" asked Johnson. Kyle looked down and frowned "Yes sir." Johnson stood above Kyle offering his arm so that he could help Kyle up, but Kyle helped his self up and walked back to a Phantom to rest for the night. "Good job, Johnson." Miranda said. "Thanks," said Johnson "but I think I lowered Kyle's confidence." Johnson started to wonder why he was so quick. It's not like he had received any special training. Just defending the new army.

Miranda walked back to the Captain's Phantom. The Captain was talking to Ning about what they should do tomorrow. "Hello Miranda." said the Captain. "Hello." said Miranda. "Something troubling you Miranda?" The Captain asked "Well, I've been thinking about alot of things... I have a question for Ning." replied Miranda. Ning looked up "What is it?" "Well I haven't seen an elite I made friends with since our last battle. His name was Orte." Ning looked puzzled "He you say. Miranda, Orte was a female." Miranda didn't know that, she felt embarased. "Let me look and see if I could home in on her whereabouts." Ning said as he walked over to the Phantom's computer. Miranda waited with the Captain. She looked at him, and he looked in pain. "Are you okay?" asked Miranda "... ..yes." said the Captain. Ning turned back around at Miranda. "Miranda, Orte... died, in our last battle." Miranda looked at the ground. "Oh. Well ...thank you." "I'm sorry, Miranda." said Ning. Miranda nodded. Just then the Arbiter came in with three elites and five grunts limping behind him. He was also carrying two humans, both females. He laid them both on the ground. "I found these two knocked out." said the Arbiter. "Well now we have 377 warriors said the Arbiter. "Good," said the Captain. "Show them to the food centers, but leave the two humans here." "Excellency," the grunt said "I have something to tell you about the location of a brute camp site." "I can see the Arbiter breifed you." said the Captain. "Go on." "Well, we were all in cages made of logs, and they were being pulled by blind wolves. We had been planing to escape for a while until our chance finally came. We hopped on some blind wolves and rode as far away as we could. Before we left we promised the others we'd come back with help." "And you shall." said the Captain "We leave tomorrow morning." "Thank you, excellency." said the grunt as he waddled out following the Arbiter to the food serving Phantoms. The two humans awoke right there. "Miranda, explain to them what's going on, I'm going to sleep." said the Captain as he limped to the built in cot in the Phantom.

Johnson was having a nightmare that night. He woke up. It was about his house being destroyed by brutes and there was nothing he could do. He looked over at the marine sleeping next to him. He saw a cigar box next to him. He opened it up, pulled one out, lit it with a match and smoked it. Then he went back to sleep.

A loud tone woke everyone up. The Captain was standing on the hill again. "Is that everyone" he said after no one else came to a Phantom and the tree beds. Ning knew that was his cue "377 warriors!" he

yelled. "Good you're all awake." said the Captain. Some of the humans were

wiping the hardened eye juice off their eyes. The Captain stood with his back straight, inhaled a big breath then exhaled. "Today is the day we set out to find the last stronghold, but last night the Arbiter found ten more warriors who are escapies from a brute campsite. Would Klang please rise and come to the alter." Klang looked around at everyone he could see and waddled up to the alter on the hill. The Captain stood aside.

"Warriors," began the grunt "me and a couple other warriors came from a brute camp site. They travel each day about 3 miles so if my calculation's are correct they should be about 21 miles northeast. They are planning to use the warriors as bait to catch blind wolves, and to make unsuspecting warriors go out of their way to save them unprepared. We are prepared, we have the skill, so we can beat the brutes!" The aliens roared. The humans looked around at the aliens and they started to roar. "Now I can't promise, you will all make it back alive, but I can breif you on what to expect. They like to travel around mountains, just in case a cave is needed, so if we get a snipe team up there we should do alot of damage. They also have jackal snipers with them so be careful. The brutes don't have a weapon to arm everyone but there are about 500 brutes. Some ride on blind wolves so we shoud keep our plasma grenades handy. The hardest part is probably the bruteshots, which have been modified so they have a longer range, but that's nothing compared to what we've got, which are warriors fighting for a higher purpose... to save our allies." All of the crowd roared, some chanted Klang. Klang waddled down, tripped on the way down, but stood up and waddled back to the crowd.

The Captain took his place back at the alter. "So our plan is to have a snipe team of 35 elites and 25 humans. I will pick the best possible snipe team using my status board." Ning handed him a hand held computer that recorded the stats of the warriors by having a link in their armor to test reflexes, balance, speed, and strength. The Captain began to pick the elites and six minutes later he picked the humans. One of the humans was Johnson. Seven names later Kyle was picked. " Okay, know we need a heavy artillery team for any vehicles the may have. I will have 100 grunts five humans and 20 elites." To save time he assigned the first four rows of 25 five grunts the job. He then read through the humans and elites. "The remainder will have the close range position, as will I. The hunters will be going behind the heavy artillery covering them. Snipe team pick a sniper, heavy artillery pick up a fuel rod cannon or a rocket launcher, and close range is issued one sword or combat knife and two close range weapons of there choice. Snipe team will be riding in the Seraphs and Phantom four. Heavy artillery will be in Phantoms five-eight. Close range will be in two-three and my Phantom." Everyone did what they were told and got aboard a flying machine.

End
file.